

K-600

Shrewsbury Academy Site  
Galena  
1817

Shrewsbury Academy (incorporated in 1817) was one of the independent academies founded in Kent County after the Revolution. Like the Millington Academy, it survived until after the Civil War, when the county public school system was inaugurated.

The Academy was established at Georgetown Cross Roads, the village that was later to become Galena. It was located on the west side of the main street. The appearance of the first building on the site is unknown, but around 1858 a new frame, two-story building was erected on the same site. A photograph of it, taken around 1888, shows a structure similar to other schools of the time. It is said to have had a vestibule with stair to the second floor, two classrooms on the first floor and one on the second; an arrangement similar to the Centreville Academy in Queen Annes County.

The building remained in use under the county system until it was replaced in 1916 by a new school at the south end of town. It was finally destroyed by fire.

K-600

c. 1858-1940

Site of Shrewsbury Academy

Galena

Private

Shrewsbury Academy (incorporated 1817) was one of the county's independent academies founded during the academy "boom" between the end of the Revolutionary War and about 1825. Unlike most, however, it (as well as the Millington Academy, K-318) endured until after the Civil War it was taken over by the county public school system. The two-storey, frame, weatherboarded schoolhouse that stood on the west side of Main Street until about 1940 was not the school's first. But it was an example of of what, when it was built about 1858, would have been considered a more than adequate structure. Simple and utilitarian, with good light and ventilation, it was one of the largest if not the largest of county schools when it was built. There were two classrooms on the first storey and one on the second, for the oldest students; a vestibule-cloakroom with the stair was in the front. Although the building now can be seen only in photographs, it seems strikingly similar to the two-storey, three-bay wide, frame schools built in the county up until after the turn of the century, when larger, somewhat more sophisticated schools were constructed. Shrewsbury Academy was closed about 1916-1918, when a new frame Galena Public School was built. It, too, is now gone.

# Maryland Historical Trust

## State Historic Sites Inventory Form

### 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic Site of Shrewsbury Academy

and/or common

### 2. Location

street & number Between 119 and 121 N. Main Street (west side) not for publication

city, town Galena vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland county Kent

### 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<u>  </u> district	<u>  </u> public	<u>  X  </u> occupied	<u>  </u> agriculture	<u>  </u> museum
<u>  </u> building(s)	<u>  X  </u> private	<u>  </u> unoccupied	<u>  </u> commercial	<u>  </u> park
<u>  </u> structure	<u>  </u> both	<u>  </u> work in progress	<u>  </u> educational	<u>  </u> private residence
<u>  X  </u> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<u>  </u> entertainment	<u>  </u> religious
<u>  </u> object	<u>  </u> in process	<u>  X  </u> yes: restricted	<u>  </u> government	<u>  </u> scientific
	<u>  </u> being considered	<u>  </u> yes: unrestricted	<u>  </u> industrial	<u>  </u> transportation
	<u>  X  </u> not applicable	<u>  </u> no	<u>  </u> military	<u>  X  </u> otherdrive, parking

### 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Harry Rudnick & Sons, Inc.

street & number telephone no.: 648-5601

city, town Galena state and zip code Maryland 21635

### 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Court House liber WHG 74

street & number Cross Street folio 305

city, town Chestertown state Maryland

### 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys NONE

title

date    federal    state    county    local

depository for survey records

city, town state

## 7. Description

Survey No. K-600

<b>Condition</b>	n/a	<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> original site
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date of move n/a _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

The main Street lot on which Shrewsbury Academy once stood is now incorporated into the property of an auction sales business. It is mostly paved for a driveway and parking space; at the rear, buildings for the auction business have been erected. Old photographs now are the only source of information about its construction, and none available show the entire building. Said to have been built about 1858 and used until about 1916, the school was two-story, of simple frame construction, and covered with horizontal, lapped weatherboard. There were two classrooms on the first story and one on the second. There was a vestibule-coatroom across the front of the building, with the stair. Windows were tall and double-hung with either 4-over-4 or 6-over-6 lights, or both. The main facade was three bays wide, with the wide double-doored main entry in the central bay; there was a five-light transom. A gable-roofed canopy, fastened to the wall with simple brackets, was above the door. To each side of the old Shrewsbury School lot is an early, possibly eighteenth-century house, though both are radically altered. The one to the south (Caldwell-Rudnick House, K-574) is also greatly enlarged.

There is an old photograph in Usilton's History of Kent County (p. 25, 1980 section) said to be of the school in 1888. It is among the Galena memorabilia collected by the late Mrs. Clara Virginia (Davis) Walters and gives the fullest view seen of the old school. However, the roof is not visible, and it could not be determined how many bays deep it was. The 1877 Kent County atlas map of Galena shows the building as very deep. At that time there was a house on nearly every lot of that part of Main Street. The main facade windows in this picture are clearly with 4-over-4 lights, and there is a window over the main entry. However, the number of lights in the side windows is not clear, though they appear to be the same. However, other photographs, owned by Merrick Huyett of Georgetown, show the side windows with 6-over-6 lights. Only the first-story windows have tall shutter with two plain, recessed panels in each leaf and sliding hardware. Window trim is wide and plain, and sills are bold. There are double corner-boards. Each door of the paired entry doors appears to have paired panels. There appears to be a small entry stoop, probably without rails.

(Continued)

## 8. Significance

Survey No. K-600

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400–1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500–1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600–1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700–1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800–1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1858 Builder/Architect

check: Applicable Criteria: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D  
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Level of Significance: ☐ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

Shrewsbury Academy (incorporated 1817) was one of the independent academies founded in Kent County during the period of the academy "boom" from the end of the Revolutionary War until about 1825. Unlike most of the others, however, it (as well as the Millington Academy) endured until after the Civil War it was taken over by the county public school system. The frame building that stood on Main Street until about 1940 was not the school's first. But it was an example of what, when it was built about 1858, would have been considered a more than adequate structure. Simple and utilitarian, with good light and ventilation, it was one of the largest if not the largest of Kent County schools when it was built. Although the building can now be only glimpsed in photographs, it seems strikingly similar to the two-story frame schools built in the county up until the turn of the century when larger, somewhat more sophisticated schools were built, though post-Civil War schools most likely were built from either state-supplied or state-approved plans.

During the 1750s a school evidently called the Shrewsbury School was operated (possibly briefly) by Shrewsbury Parish at Head of Sassafras (now just called Sassafras). A bequest from William Boyer, a parishioner, made it possible for this either to be a school for poor children only or for poor children to be able to attend a school that was not free of cost. This school seems to have been administered by the vestry. There is no evidence of a connection between this early northern Kent County school and the later Shrewsbury Academy, and it is not now known how long the church-related school operated.

(Continued)

## 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. K-600

An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, Md. Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing and Stevenson, 1877.

Martenet's Map of Kent County, Maryland. Baltimore: Simon J. Martenet, 1860

(Continued)

## 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle name \_\_\_\_\_

Quadrangle scale \_\_\_\_\_

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A 

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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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E 

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F 

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G 

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H 

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Verbal boundary description and justification

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	code	county	code
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state	code	county	code
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## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Margaret Q. Fallaw		
	County Commissioners of Kent County		
organization	Historical Society of Kent County	date	May 20, 1985
	Court House		778-4600
street & number	Cross Street	telephone	778-3499
city or town	Chestertown	state	Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

One of the Huyett photographs shows the interior of a classroom, though which one it is is not known. Since the pictured class consists of older girls, it may be of the second-storey classroom, where the older children were taught. In the years just before the end of use of this building, the second-storey classroom was for high school classes (grades 8-10). As in other nineteenth-century county schools, floors were medium-width random boards, undoubtedly unfinished. There were dark shades at the windows, probably windows of the south side. Desks were fastened to the floor, with the seats fastened to the writing portion of the desk behind. The walls were plastered above the vertical-board wainscoting, applied only to the level of the rather low window sills. The wainscoting rail was continuous with the sills. Maps were hung between the three spaced windows seen in the photograph and also on the rear, windowless wall, which may have been the partition wall between classroom and front-of-the-building vestibule. According to Miss Mary Caldwell, who attended the school, there was a door between the first-storey classrooms; there were a rear entry for the rear classroom and an entry from the vestibule for the front classroom as well. Each classroom was heated by a stove. A large playground was behind the school, divided by a fence across the lot to separate the girls from the boys. At the time Miss Caldwell went to school there, just before its closing, the grades included only the 10th. After that students went to college or to a preparatory school, she went to what is now Wesley College in Dover for her last two years of school.

Another Huyett photograph (dated 1910) shows a portion of what is probably the south side, where several windows can be seen to have 6-over-6 lights. It also shows a dark-colored band below the weatherboard at the foundation. A small, shed-roofed one-storey wing is visible in the rear, with a pair of wooden steps to it. This may have been the vestibule for the rear classroom. In all pictures the trim is painted a dark color, and the body of the building lighter, though it is not white.

Between the Revolutionary War and the end of the Civil War there was no effective, uniform, free system for public education, either in Kent County or in the state, although there was an important public-school law passed in 1825 (which, however, did not go into effect in Kent County until 1833). Meanwhile, groups in various locations organized to provide education for their children by selecting a trustee board to administer the school, securing a charter from the state, charging tuition, and applying for state subsidies. They were particularly interested in providing schooling beyond the basic level, at the preparatory or high school level. The term "academy" appeared first in state statutes in 1778. A number of these schools, generally called academies, were organized in Kent County, but Shrewsbury Academy and the Millington Academy seem to have been the most enduring.

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century, academies in Maryland became the most dominant type of school. As J. Paul Slaybaugh says in his unpublished paper, "Private Secondary Education in Maryland, 1634-1870," the "academy movement in Maryland was prompted by loss of Maryland youth to Virginia and Pennsylvania schools, by the growing opposition to going abroad for an education, by the failure of the county free schools generally, and by the good reports of the few newer schools of the academy type." He states that "between 1800 and 1850 some sixty-five academies were founded in Maryland, chartered by the Assembly."

During the first quarter of the nineteenth century especially, but also later, there was competition among the academies for state subsidies, and competition as well between the academies and the state's few colleges (including Washington College) for a share of the same money. According to Slaybaugh, "In consideration of donations by the State, each school or academy was required to furnish free tuition and textbooks for one poor child for each hundred dollars of appropriation received." Apparently, to be considered for such state aid, an academy had to be incorporated. The law providing for subsidies for the establishment of academies was passed in 1811. It was not long after that both the Millington Academy (1816) and Shrewsbury Academy were incorporated.

Shrewsbury Academy was incorporated on February 3, 1817, by an act of the Maryland legislature. The incorporating trustees were John H. Noland, Doctor Edward Scott, William Pryor, Philip F. Rasin, George William Wilson, James Pearce and William Keating--all noted and prosperous citizens of the Galena area. At least one of them, James Pearce, had been a trustee of the Georgetown School less than two miles away, which had been incorporated in 1798. (Lynn, p. 14) That school very likely did not endure long. (There was, however, a succession of James Pearces.)

A building seems to have been built and classes perhaps already held by the time of incorporation, because the act mentions "the lot of ground on which the said academy now stands, was purchased from Henry Tilghman, Esq. who conveyed the same to the use of the said academy." According to Eleanora Lynn's history of Kent County education, in the charter "the powers and duties of the trustees are set forth, one of the duties being to appoint  
(continued)



professors and teachers to instruct students 'in the languages and such sciences and branches of education as they shall think proper.'"

Fred W. Dumschott's History of Washington College (p. 63) indicates that the school was in operation in 1839, for in that year he states that the legislature voted a three-way division of the state subsidy for Kent County: \$500 for Washington College, \$100 for Shrewsbury Academy, and \$200 for the Millington Academy. (Source is evidently the Kent News, no date.) This small subsidy evidently persisted for some time. An 1863 letter to the Kent County News (Jan. 17, 1863) indicates dissatisfaction with the administration of Shrewsbury Academy, related to its imprecise status. He complained that the Shrewsbury school terms were not as long as those of other schools. A trustee replied that it was because they were forced to hire a teacher known to be incompetent and then to fire him. The complaining citizen said: "Since the Commissioners of the county were petitioned for a division of the school district on account of their being too many pupils for one school and the Board granted the petition, Double the amount is levied and collected but our school is in worse condition than before. Is it because our school is called an Academy? It would be better to drop the name, let go the one hundred dollars donated to it by the State and the people build a new house they could call their own."

The early deed for Shrewsbury Academy is not yet found. Therefore, it is not known if the building (or buildings) that preceded the circa 1858 building was in the same location. Mrs. Warren Gillespie of Galena has papers passed down in her family relating to the building of the 1858 schoolhouse, but they could not be reviewed for this report. According to Mrs. Walters' manuscript of the history of Galena, this new school was built at a cost of \$2,000.

Academies in Kent County were eventually taken over by the county public school system, evidently after the great statewide school reform right after the Civil War. In 1868 the Shrewsbury Academy property was leased to the School Commissioners of Kent County (Land Records, JKH 77498), and that year and thereafter it was listed among the schools of the First District. The Kent County schools report for the year ending September 30, 1868, lists School No. 6, District 1, as being in Galena. Presumably this was Shrewsbury Academy, having 111 students and one teacher (Charles G. Ricava) and one assistant. Together they were paid \$230 for the summer term. In 1900 the school seems to have had three teachers: William J. Boyer, Daisy B. Moffet, and Susie C. Taylor. No enrollment figure is given. (Lynn, pp. 40-43) The school was popularly known until 1916-1918, when a new, larger frame school was built elsewhere in Galena, as Shrewsbury Academy rather than Galena Public School.

E. Rankin Lusby, then of Kennedyville, in an unpublished Washington College thesis (1950) refers, not entirely clearly, to an early twentieth-century dispute (probably about 1916) between the Kent County public school system and Shrewsbury Church over ownership of the Shrewsbury Academy property. He states (p. 30) that the school system refused to sign an agreement with the church providing for the church to

control the land and the school system the building. (He states that this unsigned agreement is among church records.) He then says that "a solution was worked out later on in regards to this property, in which complete ownership of the land was given to the Church." This writer has not researched this aspect of Shrewsbury Academy history, but feels that there never was a formal relationship between Shrewsbury Church and Shrewsbury Academy. Some of the original trustees seem to have been prominent members of Shrewsbury Church, but one (Dr. Edward Scott) probably was a Methodist at this time. The trustee seem merely to be a group of prominent local citizens interested in having an academy for the Galena area. According to Katherine M. De Prospe, there is no mention in vestry minutes before 1861 of Shrewsbury Academy. Much of the period before the Civil War was a difficult one for Shrewsbury Church, it seemed at times that it would not survive. It is not likely that it would undertake responsibility for another venture. The old Shrewsbury Academy building survived until about 1940, when it was demolished, evidently having been used as a dwelling for at least part of the period between circa 1918-1940 and having stood vacant for the remainder.

That Shrewsbury Academy did provide a public gathering place for the Galena area, however, is shown by its use during the 1860s and early 1870s as the location for periodic Shrewsbury Church services to accommodate local parishioners. The "upper room" was said to have been used until St. Andrew's Chapel (K-575), farther north on Main Street, was completed in the middle 1870s. Rent evidently was paid to the school commissioners for this use, however.

Shrewsbury Academy was not the only school of note in nineteenth-century Galena, however. A short distance north on Main Street Miss E. L. Benny operated a "seminary" for young ladies. It is shown on the 1877 atlas map at the corner of Main Street and what is now called Seminary Avenue. The building is now gone, though the large trees remain, and it is used by St. Dennis Church for overflow parking. The building was said to have been large and frame and divided into numerous small rooms for boarders on the second and third storeys. Numerous Galena-area girls are known to have attended, though it is not known whether they also boarded. This school seems to have been seen as an alternative for older daughters of the local gentry. In the atlas the school was advertised by an announcement: "Miss E. L. Benny, principal, assisted by a well qualified corps of teachers. Course thorough, and Expenses Moderate." In 1879 the property was sold to John Carville Sutton for \$2,500. (*Kent County News*, March 15, 1879) Whether this transaction meant the end of the school is not known.

Eleanora M. Lynn, "A History of Education in Kent County, Maryland," unpublished typescript chapter of forthcoming history of Kent County. Rock Hall, Md.: n.d.

Anecdotal history of Kent County schools, with some old school reports attached, located Cliffs School, Chestertown. Prepared by the Kent County Retired Teachers Association, n.d.

Frederick G. Usilton, History of Kent County, Maryland, 1630-1916, with Additional 54 Chapters of the History of Kent County, Maryland, 1628-1980, by William B. Usilton, III. Chestertown, Md.: Perry Publications, 1980.

Fred W. Dumschott, Washington College. Chestertown, Md.: Washington College, 1980.

KENT CO.

(Dist. No 1)



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55'

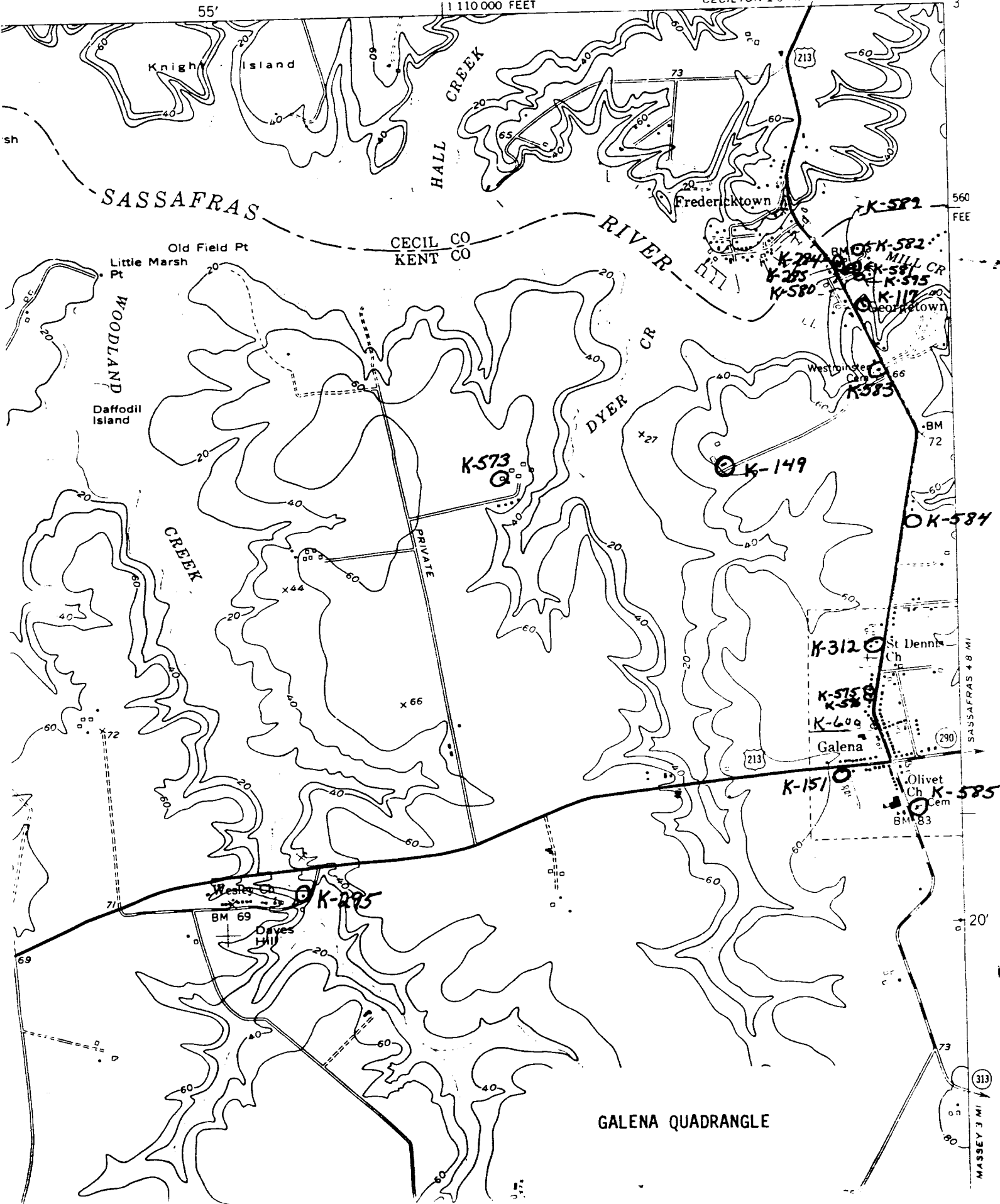
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GALENA QUADRANGLE